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ABSTRACT

This report describes how a Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title VI Library Literacy Program grant was used to improve the literacy and coping skills of illiterate and functionally illiterate inmates incarcerated at the Mississippi State Penitentiary. A second objective of this literacy program was to produce an annotated bibliography of selected materials. The report includes descriptions of the selection, purchasing, cataloging, and distributions processes for the following types of literacy materials: high interest/low vocabulary items; book/audiocassette sets; coping skills books; and career/vocational books. Information is provided about the bibliographies' content categories, production, and dissemination, as well as circulation of the materials and inmate responses to the program. Concluding this report is a list of the 24 material catalogs consulted during this program. (MAB)

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ED336104

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS FOR STATE PENITENTIARY LIBRARY PROJECT

Organization:
MISSISSIPPI LIBRARY COMMISSION
P. O. Box 10700
Jackson, MS 39289-0700

Prepared by
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Mississippi Library Commission
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GRANT NUMBER: R167A80179

GRANT AMOUNT: $6,000

AMOUNT EXPENDED: $6,000

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According to the original application, the Mississippi Library Commission (MLC) was to use the Library Services and Construction Act Title VI Library Literacy Program grant of $6,000 to improve the literacy and coping skills of illiterate and functionally illiterate inmates incarcerated at the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. The first objective was to enhance the small literacy collection at the prison library by purchasing and cataloging approximately 640 high interest\low vocabulary items. These supplementary literacy materials would include 265 book/audio cassette sets, 100 coping skills books, 100 career/vocational books, and 175 recreational reading books. The second objective of the project was to produce an annotated bibliography of the purchased materials. The goals and objectives of this project were accomplished in a timely manner. There were no major changes or revisions in the project with respect to approved activities, staffing, and budgeting.

A meeting was held at the beginning of the grant period in October of 1988 of all concerned personnel to discuss the grant process. All aspects of selection, purchasing, cataloging, and distribution of materials were covered.

During October 1988, the project coordinator started gathering and studying literacy material catalogs and bibliographies from which selection would be made. Approximately 24 catalogs of literacy materials, bibliographies of adult literacy materials, and periodicals were consulted in making the selection. The project director, the assistant project director, and the penitentiary librarian were involved in the selection of materials.

As materials were selected, the project director and assistant project director began completing order cards for each title. In December the order cards were given to the Library Commission's Collection Development Department for the actual ordering of the materials from publishers and distributors. The ordering of audio-visual (AV) materials was delayed because the Mississippi Library Commission was waiting on a ruling from the State Attorney General's Office on the new Mississippi state purchasing law. All materials were ordered by January 27, 1989.

As materials arrived at the Library Commission, they were checked for damage and the invoices were approved for payment by the Library Commission's Business Office. The books and AV materials were then ready to be cataloged and processed by the Library Commission's Cataloging Services Department and the Audio-Visual Department.

Five hundred and forty titles were ordered and received. There was some duplication of titles, but the duplicate titles were at different reading levels and/or formats. There were often cancellations of items that were no longer in stock or published. Alternate titles had been selected early in the grant process, so replacement titles were selected for ordering soon after cancellation.

The Cataloging Services Department used OCLC to catalog the book materials. Each book was cataloged as an individual title. The AV material was accessioned with a numerical system. All materials in the AV kits were numbered with the accession number. MLC purchased hanger bags to store the AV materials. Since the penitentiary library did not have enough shelf space for the AV materials, MLC purchased two media racks for use in the inmate library. The Vocational School students at the penitentiary also built a media rack for the penitentiary library.

In a show of support for the literacy efforts of the penitentiary library, the Mississippi Department of Corrections (DOC) purchased additional literacy materials for the inmate library. Tutor training materials, student workbooks and textbooks, and video tapes from New Readers' Press, totaling $1,638.55, are now available in the library at Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman. The penitentiary librarian uses these materials to supplement Laubach Tutor Training Workshops for inmates at the penitentiary.

During the processing phase, each book obtained through the grant was stamped with "Purchased by the Mississippi Library Commission with LSCA Title VI funds." Since many of the books were very small in format, the project director opted to use the rubber stamp rather than a book plate in each volume to give credit for the project funds.

Delivery of the materials to the Mississippi State Penitentiary Library was begun in March of 1989. The project director requested that circulation statistics be maintained for the literacy materials. The circulation cards were color coded by the inmate clerks to aid in keeping track of these materials. Circulation figures were kept by the penitentiary library for the months of May through October 1989. The bulk of the literacy materials were delivered to the penitentiary in May.

The greater part of the literacy tapes and books is housed at the library at Mississippi State Penitentiary. These materials are available to all inmates and staff at the penitentiary. A small collection, consisting of ten to twenty book, was placed at Unit 23 for the use in the literacy classroom located there. The mathematics teacher and the language arts teacher for the Basic Adult Education program at Unit 30 also checked out materials for classroom use.

In its application, the Mississippi Library Commission proposed to produce a bibliography of selected materials and disseminate it to libraries and interested parties throughout the state. The assistant project director began gathering material for the bibliography in July of 1989. Work on the bibliography was begun in August. For the development of the bibliography, the assistant project director downloaded OCLC records to ProCite, input AV records directly to ProCite, and then manipulated the data to generate a 129-page annotated subject bibliography.

Initially, in the ordering phase, the materials were grouped into the broad categories of Readalongs, Career, Coping, and Recreation materials as described in the application. To make the materials easier to access and the bibliography more helpful, all the titles were categorized into twenty different subject/format terms within the printed bibliography: Automobiles; Biography; Communication Skills; Consumer Information; Coping Skills; Crafts; English as a Second Language; Fiction; GED; Health, Nutrition, & Safety; History and Government; Job Skills; Large Print; Mathematics; Money Management; Readalongs; Readers; Religion; Science; and Tutor. A listing of the publishers and distributors used during the project was also included in the printed bibliography.

Realizing the benefit of the bibliography to local literacy program participants and its value as a selection tool, the Mississippi Library Commission printed 600 copies of the bibliography. Approximately 480 copies of the bibliography have been distributed. Forty-five copies of the bibliography were distributed to Mississippi public library administrative units in September. Four hundred copies were available for distribution at the Governor's Fourth Annual Statewide Adult Literacy Conference in Jackson on November 2, 1989. The Governor's Office for Literacy and the Mississippi State Penitentiary Library each received multiple copies of the bibliography.

Besides producing and disseminating the bibliography, the Mississippi Library Commission promoted the Title VI project through news articles. Articles appeared in several newspapers and in two different editions of the Mississippi Library Commission publication, The Packet. The materials were also promoted within the penitentiary through the Department of Corrections publication. Copies of the bibliography were given to inmate tutors within the penitentiary. The penitentiary librarian discussed the literacy materials in her monthly classes for DOC employees, sponsored by their staff development department. The literacy materials were also promoted by the teachers of ABE and Vocational classes within the penitentiary.

According to the submitted project budget, all $6,000 was to be spent on acquiring the materials for the collection. All of the grant funds were used for the stated purpose. At the completion of the project, the collection consisted of 540 titles. The average cost per title was $11.11, which was higher than anticipated at the time the proposal was submitted. The collection contained 286 readalongs, 56 career titles, 65 coping titles, and 133 recreational titles.

To evaluate the success of the project, the Mississippi Library Commission proposed to monitor the circulation of the materials. Total circulation of all materials at the penitentiary library from May 1989 to October 1989 was 376. The figures ranged from 50 circulated items in July to 100 in June. The average number of circulations was 63. Materials were circulated to inmates, teachers and classrooms within the penitentiary.

The readalongs with the highest circulations were titles in the Library of the Universe Series by Isaac Asimov. Classics and fiction stories were also very popular readalongs. Readalong series that had little to no circulation were two published by Fearon Educational: That's Life and The Pacemaker Vocational series. Materials in book format that had high circulation were biographies, particularly the Superstar series. Writing, punctuation, and pre-GED books were also popular. The Coping Books Series published by Rosen Publishing Group was fast moving among the inmate population. Materials in book format that did not circulate well were the Career Adventure Series published by Fearon Educational. The staff at the penitentiary library also reported that history books in general did not go over well with the inmates. Tutor materials were well received.

The penitentiary library received several letters from inmate tutors and students complimenting the new literacy materials. One of the inmate students wrote, "I have been concealing my ignorance about my lack of knowledge of reading, writing, math, phonics, English, and spelling, and this program, along with the help of my tutor, has given me a new life to develop my mind in these skills."

Another inmate participating in the literacy program stated, "I know that when I get out, my head will be on right about how to do things and get me a good job."

Another inmate wrote to say, "I'd just like to say that I'm very fortunate to be one of many participants and I'll do my best to succeed and keep the flame burning so others can find shelter, once they discover how cold it really is out there."

"I think that supplying the books for us is one of the best things in this penitentiary," was the feeling expressed by another student.

"Because of these materials my literacy students have been able to expand their course of studies to go on to different areas of education. Because of this education program, I have started to believe that changes for the better can be made. I think that we are making a difference here, and I know that together we will continue to grow in our efforts." This statement was made by inmate tutor Terry Bates, who began the tutoring program for the inmates in Unit 15-B.

The impact of these supplementary materials has been very positive. One of the ABE teachers expressed this opinion: "The readalong cassettes are very helpful to the students in many ways. They help to teach the students how to comprehend effectively the material they read as part of their school subject. They help to increase the students' vocabulary. They provide practice materials for each student on a number of different levels. They also help the students to recognize their reading problems. Most of all the tapes and booklets are individualized and developed to help each student to reach his highest level of potential."

Material Catalogs Consulted

Alemany Press
2501 Industrial Parkway, W.
Hayward, CA 94545

American Reference
P. O. Box 1777
Topeka, KS 66601

Audio Language Studies
1 Colomba Drive
Niagara Falls, NY 14305

Bancroft-Sage
635 8th Street So
P. O. Box 664
Naples, FL 33939-0664

Cambridge
Prentice Hall
200 Old Tappan Road
Old Tappan, NJ 07675

Clearvue, Inc.
5711 North Milwaukee Avenue
Chicago, IL 60601

Contemporary Books, Inc.
180 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60601

Fearon Education
500 Harbor Boulevard
Belmont, CA 94002

Jabberwocky
P. O. Box H
Hovato, CA 94002

Literacy Vols. of Amer.
Widewaters One Office Bld.
5795 Widewaters Parkway
Syracuse, NY 13214

National Textbook Company
4255 West Touhy Avenue
Lincolnwood, IL 60646-
1975

New Readers' Press
1320 Jamesville Avenue
Box 131
Syracuse, NY 13210

Raintree Publishers, Inc.
310 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Rosen Publishing Group
29 East 21st Street
New York, NY 10010

Scott, Foresman Company
1900 East Lake Avenue
Glenview, IL 60025

Steck-Vaughn Company
P. O. Box 26015
Austin, TX 78755

Sun Belt Literacy
1401 SW Topeka Boulevard
Topeka, KA 66612

Sundance Publishers
P. O. Box 1326
Littleton, MA 01460

Jamestown Publishers
P. O. Box 9168
Providence, RI 02940

Janus Books
2501 Industrial Parkway, W
Hayward, CA 94545

Listening Library
1 Park Avenue
Old Greenwich, CT 06870-9990

SVE
1345 Diversey Parkway
Chicago, IL 60614-1299

Turman Publishing Company
200 West Mercer
Seattle, WA 98119

Wieser Educational, Inc.
30081 Comercio
Rancho Santa Margarita,
CA 92688

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT

4/10/91

MEMORANDUM

TO : Carol Cameron
Program Office

FROM : Mary Foreman
Grants Specialist

ESBER Branch

ROB #3, Room 3653, Mail Stop 4729

SUBJECT : Final Performance Report

Under the Secretary's Initiative on grantee accountability, attached is the final performance report for the following grant:

Grant Number: K167A80179 PR Number: _____

Grantee Name and State: Mississippi Library Comm
Jackson, MS

Because of time constraints, any concerns about the programmatic acceptability of this grant must be recorded on this memorandum and returned to me within 30 working days. Otherwise, we will proceed to close out this grant.

Attachment

TO: Grants Specialist

The programmatic requirements for this grant have/have not (circle one) been accomplished.

If requirements have not been accomplished, please provide an explanation below.

_____ _____
Program Specialist Date

400 MARYLAND AVE., S.W. WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202